

**U. S. National Commission on
Libraries and Information Science**

1110 Vermont Avenue NW Suite 820
Washington DC 20005-3552

**Meeting of the
U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
January 15, 2005
Boston, MA**

These minutes report actions and summarize discussions occurring at the Commission meeting. A verbatim transcript of the meeting is maintained at the Commission office.

Present:

Commissioners: Beth Fitzsimmons, Chairman, Bridget Lamont, Vice-Chairman, José Aponte, Sandra Ashworth, Edward L. Bertorelli, Joan Challinor, Carolyn T. Brown (for The Librarian of Congress), Carol Diehl, Allison Druin, Jack E. Hightower, Colleen Huebner, Stephen Kennedy, Robert Martin, Herman Totten

NCLIS staff: Trudi Bellardo Hahn, Interim Executive Director, Robert Molyneaux, Director, Statistics and Surveys

Consultant: Guy St. Clair

Opening Remarks

After calling the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m., Chairman Fitzsimmons welcomed everyone present. She asked the members of the Commission and the consultant to introduce themselves to the audience and invited guests. She asked the guests to introduce themselves. She introduced the Interim Executive Director, Trudi Bellardo Hahn, and announced her appointment of Dr. Hahn to serve as Secretary *pro tem* and

Parliamentarian *pro tem*. She thanked Commissioner Bertorelli for making the arrangements to meet at the Boston Public Library.

Chairman Fitzsimmons announced that Nancy Bolt, State Librarian of Colorado, is retiring. Ms. Bolt has been the liaison from COSLA to NBCLIS for many years. Chairman Fitzsimmons thanked her for her years of services as liaison between the two groups.

Agenda

With some rearrangement of topics, the agenda was *approved*.

Approval of Minutes

The three sets of minutes from Commission meetings held in Reno, Nevada (May 2003), and Washington, DC, (December 2003) and April 2004 were *approved*.

Strategic Partnerships Guidelines

Chairman Fitzsimmons provided background on the document, “Strategic Partnerships, Sponsorships, and Collaborative Arrangements: Guidelines for the Commission.” The document has been reviewed by legal counsel in the U. S. Department of Education.

Action: The document was *approved*.

Consultant’s Report

Mr. St. Clair described the projects that he has completed during the past year. One was a communications plan that focuses on general communications, primarily external, including press and public relations. Several press releases on various topics were distributed during the year. The communications plan also covers policies and guidelines for federal public Web sites as recommended by the Interagency Committee for Government Information. As a federal agency, NCLIS is required to adhere to those guidelines. The Commission’s major public relations tool for the next six months will be a special report, “The New NCLIS,” that will be released later in the month. Commissioners were invited to make suggestions about possible targets for distribution of the report.

The Commission will be contracting with Duetto Communications of Arlington, Virginia for the public relations efforts associated with the May 2nd event at the National Agriculture Library for the Libraries and Health Communication initiative.

A template of talking points has been created for Commissioners who wish to make presentations about NCLIS to the public. It comes in two versions—one is a PowerPoint presentation; the other is a printed outline. Commissioner Perdue has produced some model articles about the Libraries and Health Communication initiative which can be

used as a prototype or template. Commissioners can insert their own local information and share the byline with her. All of these materials are available by contacting the NCLIS office. Commissioners are encouraged to look for related professional conferences and meetings at which they might make a presentation or be recognized.

Several Commissioners reported on the success of the ceremonies and speeches associated with the Blue Ribbon Awards. Commissioner Perdue was complimented on the “spectacular” plaques and how much recipients appreciated them. It was stressed that a monetary award is not as important to local libraries as is recognition for the value of their contributions to their communities. It was suggested that future prizes not be limited to public libraries—excellent service to the public from any type of library should be recognized.

Appraisal/Assessment Initiative Task Force

Mr. Molyneux reported on his investigations about existing appraisal or assessment models. A written summary of this work was presented in a document titled, “U.S. Public Library Data; A Unified Approach.” He has invited a group of data analysis experts and others involved in assessment projects from around the country to meet regularly to work together on new measures. Commissioner Aponte invited Chairman Fitzsimmons to join the task force for this initiative.

Future meeting dates for Commission meetings

Two dates have been reserved (May 19-20 or May 23-24). The dates will be finalized after we hear whether Laura Bush is available for a Commission reception at the White House.

NCLIS presence at ALA Legislative Day and other events of professional associations

It was recommended that the Commission be present at some of the meetings. It was also suggested that a one-page handout on the relationship between school libraries and educational achievement would be useful to give to the First Lady and other groups.

Commission meeting materials

Different Commissioners have different preferences for ways to receive the materials in advance of the meeting; some prefer mail, some prefer e-mail, and some prefer fax. If at all possible in the future, everything will be sent by overnight mail a week in advance of the meeting.

FY 2005 projected budget and 2004 meeting costs breakdown

Interim Executive Director Hahn walked through a summary of the FY 2005, as of the second quarter. The total amount, \$993,000, was our appropriation and we had to fit expenses to that. Not all categories of the budget could be accommodated in the '05 appropriation. Some were pre-paid from 2004 funds (mainly from NCES funds that come every year in the fourth quarter). Other items, such as training, will be limited, and other

will not be paid at all (e.g., subscriptions, memberships, and meeting registrations). Also, we are facing a large unanticipated expense related to the construction of the new office space. Eventually we will realize savings from the lower rent for the new office, but in the short term we are extremely tight.

Preview of 109th Congress

Emily Sheketoff, Executive Director of the ALA Washington Office, reported on legislative issues most relevant to NCLIS initiatives. She distributed one-page overviews of key issues which the ALA Washington Office prepared. In the new Congress, many of the chairs of committees that deal with library issues have changed. Spending for domestic programs will be cut in many areas.

The Telecomm Act will probably be reopened, which could affect the e-rate program for libraries. Legislators need to be educated about the implications for the public in having access to government information and transactions (e-government) as well many other types of electronic information through their public libraries. Examples include filing income taxes and completing immigration forms. It was recommended that the Commission consider further examination of this complicated issue and make recommendations to Congress and the administration in regard to libraries as community technology centers in order to give access to people who do not have it.

Another piece of legislation that may be revised is No Child Left Behind. This may be an opportunity to lobby for school media specialists to be highly qualified. NCLIS could work with ALA to support the effort. Another ally may be the new Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings. It was recommended that the Commission consider ways to call attention to the value of school librarians, perhaps through a school librarian of the year award.

Ms. Sheketoff also discussed the legislation called "DOIT," Digital Promise, which is being reintroduced this spring. She does not anticipate that it will be passed in this Congress.

Emergency Preparedness Initiative

Commission Kennedy and guest Mr. Michael York, state librarian of New Hampshire distributed a draft white paper about efforts in New Hampshire to get the public to recognize public libraries as community centers. This includes educating the public about emergency preparedness. Key librarians around the state have organized to study this. Even though New Hampshire is a small state, its border location means that it has a wide variety of vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks, and New Hampshire's best practices could serve as models for other states.

It was recommended that the Commission continue to work with Mr. York and key figures in New Hampshire.

Educational Achievement Initiative

Commissioner Druin summarized the work of the task force, which has mainly been to identify the research that has already been done in linking improved school media centers with gains in educational outcomes. The task force is preparing a one-page fact sheet based on the research. The ALA Washington Office is also working on this.

It was suggested that the Commission write letters to the new Secretary of Education as well as to school board administrators.

Again the idea of a school librarian of the year award was discussed. Several similar awards are offered by various professional and commercial organizations.

The task force will draft letters for the Commission to review.

Management review team

Chairman Fitzsimmons announced that she has formed the team with herself and Commissioners Aponte, Bertorelli, Challinor, Lamont, and Totten, and Interim Executive Director Hahn. The team will examine personnel issues and the budget. Under the budget will be examined how the money is being spent and what other sources of income may be possible.

Commissioner Druin volunteered the services of her students at no cost to help redesign the NCLIS Web site.

Libraries as HIV/AIDS Information Distribution Centers in Africa

Commissioner Challinor summed up John Scott's study in Cameroon of libraries and library-like institutions and dissemination of AIDS/HIV information to the public. Another consultant from the University of Tennessee, Dr. Kendra Albright, will be assigned the task of finalizing the report with a bibliography and analysis of the bigger picture of AIDS/HIV information dissemination in sub-Saharan Africa.

Library Services for the Aging

Commissioner Ashworth reported that several Commissioners attended an ALA planning on January 14, in preparation for the White House Conference in October 2005. An official pre-conference will be held in Chicago at the Annual Meeting of ALA and the report from that will be part of the package that goes to the delegates to the WHCoA. A full-day post-conference will be held in January 2006 at ALA Midwinter. NCLIS will submit a briefing paper by March 1 for the pre-conference in June.

A process for selecting delegates will be announced on the WHCoA Web site later this spring. Any Commissioner may request to be a delegate.

Libraries and Health Communication Initiative

Mr. St. Clair reported for the chair of the task force, Commissioner Perdue. He is preparing a “best practices” document that will sum up the programs that won the Blue Ribbon Awards and will provide guidance for other libraries who wish to expand their consumer health outreach. The May 2 event at the National Agriculture Library will be an occasion to honor our partners, the members of COSLA, to invite dignitaries and friends of NCLIS and NAL, and to announce future plans for this initiative.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.